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## THE DAILY REBEL.

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## BATTLE OF MURFREESBORO.

### GEN. BRAGG'S OFFICIAL REPORT.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF TENNESSEE,  
Tullahoma, 23d Feb'y, 1863.

SIR.—On the 26th of December last the enemy advanced in force from Nashville to attack us at Murfreesboro'. It had been well ascertained that his strength was over 60,000 effective men. Before night on that day the object of the movement was developed, by our dispositions in front, and orders were given for the necessary concentration of our forces at their distribution as follows:

Polk's corps and three brigades of Breckinridge's division, Hardee's corps at Murfreesboro. The balance of Hardee's corps near Kagleville, about 20 miles west of Murfreesboro, McCown's division (which with Stevans' division removed constituted Smith's corps) at Resdyville, 12 miles east of Murfreesboro. The three cavalry brigades of Wheeler, Wharton and Pegram occupying the entire front of our infantry and covering all approaches to within ten miles of Nashville. Buford's small cavalry brigade of about 600 at McMinnville. The brigades of Forrest and Morgan about 5000 effective cavalry were absent on special service in West Tennessee and Northern Kentucky, as will be more fully noticed hereafter. Jackson's small infantry brigade was in rear, guarding the rail-road from Bridgeport, Alabama, to the mountains. On Sunday the 28th, our main force of infantry and artillery was concentrated in front of Murfreesboro, whilst the cavalry supported by three brigades of infantry and three batteries of artillery impeded the advance of the enemy, by constant skirmishing, and sudden unexpected attacks. To the skillful manner in which the cavalry, thus ably supported, was handled, and to the exceeding gallantry of its officers and men, must be attributed the four days' time consumed by the enemy in reaching the battle-field, a distance of only 20 miles from his encampment over the Macadamed roads.

Fully aware of the greatly superior numbers of the enemy, as indicated in my early reports from this quarter, it was our policy to await attack. The position was selected and line developed with this intention. Owing to the convergence upon our depot of so many roads, by which the enemy could approach, as will appear from the enclosed map marked "I," we were confined in our selection to a line near enough the point of juncture to enable us to successfully concentrate all our resources.

On Monday, the 29th, it was reported that heavy columns moved on both the direct road from Lavergne and on the one leading into the Lebanon road by way of Jefferson. But on Tuesday, the 30th, it was ascertained that the Jefferson pike was abandoned by a counter-march, and the whole force of the enemy were concentrated on and near the direct road on the west of Stone's river. The dispositions made for the unequal contest will appear from the enclosed map marked "2," and the copy of memoranda to General and staff officers marking "3."

These arrangements were all completed before the enemy crossed Stewart's creek, nine miles out, and the infantry brigades were at once called in; and the cavalry was ordered to fall back more rapidly, having most gallantly discharged its duty and fully accomplished the objects desired. Late on Monday, it became apparent the enemy was extending to his right, to flank us on the left. McCown's division in reserve was promptly thrown to that flank, and added to the command of Lt. Gen. Polk. The enemy not meeting our expectations of making an attack on Tuesday, which was consumed in artillery firing and heavy skirmishing, with the exception of a dash late in the evening on the left of Withers' division, which was repulsed and severely punished, it was determined to assail him on Wednesday morning, the 31st.

For this purpose, Cleburne's Division, Hardee's corps, was moved from the second line on the right to the corresponding position on the left, and Lt. Gen. Hardee was ordered to that point, and assigned to the command of that and McCown's Division. This disposition, the result of necessity, left me no reserve; but Breckinridge's command on the right, now not threatened, was regarded as a source of supply for any reinforcements absolutely necessary to other parts of the field. Stone's river at its low stage, was fordable at almost any point for infantry, and at short intervals perfectly practicable for artillery.

These dispositions completed, Lt. Gen. Hardee was ordered to assail the enemy at daylight on Wednesday, the 31st, the attack to be taken up by Gen. Polk's command in succession to the right flank; the move to be made by a constant wheel to the right on Polk's right flank as a pivot. The object being to force the enemy back on Stone's river, and if practicable, by the aid of cavalry, cut him off from his base of operations and supplies by the Nashville pike.

The lines were now bivouacked at a distance in places, of not more than 500 yards, the camp fires of the two being within distinct view. Wharton's cavalry brigade had been held on our left to watch and check the movements of the enemy in that direction, and to prevent his cavalry from gaining the railroad in our rear, the preservation of which was of vital importance. In this he was aided by Brig. Gen. A. Buford, who had a small command of 600 new cavalry. The duty was most ably, gallantly and successfully performed.

On Monday night, Brig. Gen. Wheeler proceeded with his cavalry brigade and one regiment from Pegram's, as ordered, to gain the enemy's rear. By Tuesday morning, moving on the Jefferso pike, around the enemy's whole army, and soon attacked the trains, their guards and the numerous stragglers. He succeeded in capturing several hundred prisoners and destroying hundreds of wagons loaded with supplies and baggage. After clearing the road he made his way entirely around, and joined the cavalry on our left.

The failure of Gen. McCown to execute during the night an order for a slight change in the line of his division, and which had to be

done the next morning, caused some delay in the general and vigorous assault by Lt. Gen. Hardee. But about 7 o'clock the rattle of musketry and the roar of artillery announced the beginning of the conflict. The enemy was taken completely by surprise; general and staff officers were not mounted, artillery horses not hitched, and infantry not formed. A hot and invigorating breakfast of coffee and other luxuries to which our gallant and hardy men had long been strangers, was found upon the fire, unsewed, and was left, whilst we pushed on to the enjoyment of a more inviting feast, that of captured artillery, flying mortars, and hosts of craven prisoners, begging for the lives they had forfeited by their acts of brutality and atrocity. Whilst thus roasting and pushing the enemy on its front, Lt. Gen. Hardee announced to me, by a messenger, that the movement was not being as promptly executed by Maj. Gen. Cleburne's command on his right, the left of Gen. Polk's corps, as he expected, and that his line was consequently exposed to an enfilade fire from the enemy's artillery at that front. The necessary instructions for prompt movement at that point were immediately dispatched, and in a short time our whole line, except Breckinridge's command, was warmly engaged. From this time we continued to drive the enemy more or less rapidly until his line was thrown entirely back at right angles to his first position, and occupied the out of the railroad, along which he had massed his reserves, and posted very strong batteries. (A reference to the map No. 2 will show this second and strong position.)

The enemy's loss was very heavy in killed and wounded; far exceeding our own, as appears from a critical examination of the field, now almost entirely in our possession. Of artillery alone we had secured more than 25 pieces. Whilst the infantry and artillery were engaged in this successful work, Brig. Gen. Wharton, with his cavalry command, was most actively and gallantly engaged on the enemy's right and rear, where he inflicted a heavy loss in killed and wounded; captured a full battery of artillery endeavoring to escape, and secured and sent of near 2,000 prisoners.

These important successes and results had not been achieved without heavy sacrifices on our part, as the resistance of the enemy, after the first surprise was most gallant and obstinate. Finding Lt. Gen. Hardee so formidable opposed by the movement of the enemy to his front, reinforcements for him were ordered from Maj. Gen. Breckinridge, but the orders were countermanded, as will hereafter appear, and Polk's corps was pressed forward with vigor, hoping to draw the enemy back, or route him on the right, as he had already done on the left. We succeeded in driving him from every position, except the strong one held by his extreme left flank, resting on Stone's river, and covered by a concentration of artillery of superior range and calibre, which seemed to bid me defiance. The difficulties of our general advance had been great, retarded by the boggy roads of the country, and the want of water to quench the thirst of our men, as well as the want of supplies, and the want of time to march, and the want of rest.

During the afternoon, Brig. Gen. Pegram, discovering a hospital and large number of stragglers in rear of the enemy's lines and across Stone's river, charged them with his cavalry, and captured about 170 prisoners. Both arms, headed by a leader in the division, surprised by its sudden movement, and in reality and in its losses sustained, rank, in respect to the sun, and quiet prevailed in the night.

At dawn on Tuesday morning, the first of January, orders were sent to the several commanders to press forward their skirmishers, feel the enemy and report any change in his position. Maj. Gen. Breckinridge had been transferred to the right of Stone's river to reinforce the command of that position, now held by his division, except the withdrawal of the enemy from an advanced position occupied by his left flank. Finding, upon further examination, that this was the case, the right flank of Gen. Polk's corps was thrown forward to cover the gap for which we had no plan at that instant. At the same moment, we also reported that we had captured about 1,000 sick, too feeble to bear transportation, and about 300 well men and medical officers among them.

In addition to this, the enemy had captured about 500 prisoners from us. As the 12th division was counted once more, that head among us, they should be excluded from the general total.

As an offer to his foes he had secured, as will appear from the report of my successor, General Lee, about 1,000, considerably over 600 prisoners had captured over 30 pieces of artillery, and a large amount of other valuable property, all of which was seized, and appropriated to proper uses. Besides all this, we had destroyed not less than 100 wagons, mostly laden with various articles, such as gunnery, ammunition, etc., and horses, with a large amount of other valuable property, all of which was seized, and appropriated to proper uses. We had lost 100 pieces of artillery, and all of Breckinridge's property. A number of stands of colors, none of which are for colored soldiers, were also captured by the rebels. Of these known to have been taken, have not been sent in. The last marked "3" is here with trans-

lated.

A similar statement of our forces March 1st is herewith submitted, showing the number of skirmishers we had on the field, as the morning of the 31st of December, to have been less than 33,000, and about 30,000 were infantry and artillery.

Our losses, greatly worse and much reduced by the efforts of our troops, and the want of supplies, were now ready to await our attack, and were advancing to attack his lines. He was immediately ordered not to await attack, but to advance and meet them. About this same time a report reached me that a heavy force of the enemy's infantry was advancing on the Lebanon road, about five miles in Breckinridge's front. Brig. Gen. Pegram, who had been sent to that road, to cover the flank of the infantry with his cavalry brigade, save two regiments detached with Wheeler and Wharton, was ordered to gain the enemy's rear again, and remain there to guard his left, and to indefinitely impede whether any retrograde movement was being made.

Upon the arrival of the cavalry, informed me that heavy rains were moving towards Nashville, and that the passes would be closed, all the roads and paths, many wagons were destroyed and turned to pasture ground. We do not know the exact extent of damage, and the enemy's divisional and brigadeal and infantry, with later trains, and thus the impression was made on our amateur commanders that a prolonged movement was going on.

Our forces, greatly weaker and much reduced by heavy losses, were now ready to attack the enemy, and no change in the enemy's position; but it was deemed necessary to assault him as soon as possible. They yielded their lives in the heroic discharge of duty, and leave their honored names as high legacy to their descendants. Brig. Gen. Jay, R. Chalmers and P. W. Adams received disabling wounds on Wednesday. I am happy to say not serious, but which deprived us of their valuable services. Having been under my immediate command since the beginning of the war, I can bear evidence to their devotion, and to the conspicuous gallantry which has marked their services on every field.

For the sacred names of other heroes and patriots of lower grades, who gave their lives illustrating the character of the "Confederate soldier" on this bloody field, I must refer to the reports of subordinate commanders, and to the list which will be submitted. Our losses, it will be seen, exceeded 10,000, nine thousand of whom were killed and wounded.

The enemy's loss we have no means of knowing with certainty. One corps commanded by Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Crittenden, which was least exposed in the engagement, reports over 3,000 killed and wounded. As far as two other corps, and a separate division, of a corps, and their cavalry, it is safely estimated at 3,000 killed and 16,000 wounded, making 22,000 plus minus, and we have a total of 25,273.

Brig. Gen. Polk, and W. J. Hardee commanding corps, M. J. Geys, J. W. Withers and P. B. Gildersome, commanding divisions, are specially commended to the Government for their valor, skill and ability, displayed by them throughout the engagement.

Brig. Gen. J. Patten Anderson, for the coolness and judgment and courage with which he interpreted his brigade between retreating forces and the enemy, and especially given for the concentration of the whole of Maj. Gen. Breckinridge's division in front of the position to be taken. His addition to his command of the ten Napoleon guns, 12-pdr., under Capt. F. M. Morrison, an able and accomplished artillery officer, and for the cavalry forces of Wharton and Pegram, about 22,000 men, taken in the attack on his right. Maj. Gen. Breckinridge was set for, and advised of the movement and its objects, the securing and holding the position which protected Polk's flank and gave us command of the enemy's, by which he was informed of the forces placed to his disposal, and instructed them to drive the enemy back, and instructed them to drive the enemy back, and to make him a failure.

At daylight on Friday, the 2d, orders to feel the enemy and ascertain his position were repeated with the same result. The cavalry brigades of Wheeler and Wharton had returned during the night, greatly exhausted from long continued service, with but little rest or food to either man or horse. Both commanders reported the indications from the enemy's movements the same. Aiming them only a few hours to feed and rest, and sending the two detached regiments back to Pegram's brigade, Wharton was ordered to the right flank, across Stone's river, to as some command in that quarter, and Legg, my adj't, was advised of any change. Wheeler, with his brigade, was ordered to gain the enemy's rear again, and remain there to guard his left, and to indefinitely impede whether any retrograde movement was being made.

Before Wharton had taken his position, observing my signal to regard to a movement having been made by the enemy across Stone's river, immediately in Breckinridge's front, Breckinridge, upon receiving information of an important movement on either side, and was informed by me in giving the battle-field, in which he was to be engaged, and was ordered to his command of the 12th division, 12-pdr., under Capt. F. M. Morrison, an able and accomplished artillery officer, and for the cavalry forces of Wharton and Pegram, about 22,000 men, taken in the attack on his right. Maj. Gen. Breckinridge was set for, and advised of the movement and its objects, the securing and holding the position which protected Polk's flank and gave us command of the enemy's, by which he was informed of the forces placed to his disposal, and instructed them to drive the enemy back, and instructed them to drive the enemy back, and to make him a failure.

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